
Title: Virtues Manifest, Volume I

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The chamber
remained as it had for
eons, devoid of motion,
light, and sound.
Countless ages had
passed since it had
last been used, but
that was to change
quite shortly. All
about the room torches
sprang to life, casting
shadows, which
danced about like
children at a Yule
festival. The only
furnishings within
the room were an
enormous onyx table
surrounded by eight
throne-like chairs.
Suddenly each chair
was assaulted by a
showering of light.
Each throne's drizzle
was of a different
hue: blue, purple,
yellow, red, green,
orange, white, and
gray. The droplets of
light began to manifest
themselves, each
solidifying
themselves into
human form.

The first to manifest
completely was the
showering of blue
light. Sharply
trimmed blonde hair
framed an open face.
Pale blue eyes gazed
out upon the remaining
cascades. Slowly the
man straightened his
well-tailored white
tunic and ensured its
ends where secure

within the steel blue
kilt he wore with
pride. He
effortlessly flexed
the fingers of his
open hands as he took
in his surroundings.
Smiling to himself he
adjusted his position
within his seat at the
head of the table. He
tilted his head ever so
slightly to the right so
that he might witness
the next
transformation.
Flecks of purple light
began to adhere to one
another as a massive
form rapidly took
shape. The man's
enormous chest
muscles rippled as he
stretched his
well-tanned arms
above his baldhead, a
massive battle-axe
held gingerly in his
strong hands.
Torchlight reflected
off a lone earring
dangling from the
figure's left lobe as he
slowly inclined his
head to the rooms only
other current
occupant. Gently he
settled his axe within
a harness sewn into
his leather leggings
and turned to his right
to view the next
entrance.

Golden yellow light
fluttered down like
specks of dust
collecting and forming
limbs; much like the
summoning of an
earth elemental.
However the physical
features of the new
arrival were quite in
contrast to those of the
hulking stone golems.
The feminine body
was soft and inviting,

long golden locks fell haphazardly onto a sandy-yellow silken robe. Her delicate fingers rested lightly upon a padded staff, which leaned against her chair. She smiled warmly at her long time friends and sat back to await the arrival of the others.

As the crimson light faded a figure covered head to toe in plate mail the color of a moonless nighttime sky appeared in the chair to the right of the woman. A cape the color of freshly drawn blood hung about his shoulders, attached to the armor by golden clasps in the form of majestic dragons. In its gauntleted hand the figure held tightly a studded mace, forged of the same metal as its armor, giving the impression that it was in actuality an extension of the creature's arm. The illusion quickly dissipated however as the figure placed the mace within its lap and removed its helm.

Dark brown hair was pulled back into a ponytail, which was fastened by a thong of leather. The man's eyes though the same color, as his hair seemed to glow with an inner light. He shifted slightly to face the seated guests and saluted them all by bringing his fist to his chest. With practiced grace he then brushed aside a

few stray strands of
hair that had fallen
over his eyes, and sat
back in silence
to await the rest of the
retinue.

At the other end of the
table, directly across
from the first visitor
the pale green light
began to manifest
itself. A woman of
immense beauty
appeared before them
all. Her long black
hair hung loosely
about her shoulders,
it's color more akin to
onyx than any other.
It fell upon silver
plate armor, which
reflected the light of
the torches, and
dazzled the other's
sight. Despite the
thick metal however
the curves of her
body seemed even
more defined by it. A
figure which many
women would envy
and most men would
kill to sample. It was
the sword that rested
easily within her
right hand however;
that drew the most
attention. Its medium
sized blade was
forged of a bluish
metal, similar to
valorite but with
greater luminosity,
about it's edge; seeming
to hover like
phosphorous was a
pale red light. She
smiled an alluring
smile then she too
turned to her right to
witness the next
visitors entrance.

The orange mist took
on a wraith-like form
at first then it too
slowly began to

solidify. Well-worn
leather armor covered
a female frame.
Fiery red hair draped
down her back,
partially obscuring
the wooden bow,
which was slung with
practiced ease over
her left shoulder.
Her face was fair to
look at, yet there
seemed to be a constant
sense of woe about her
that caused each
person who gazed
upon her to picture
some of his or her
most painful
memories. Smiling
meekly towards her
colleagues she sat
back, seeming to meld
into the cushions of
her chair and silently
awaited the next
member.

Shards of blinding
white light began to
swirl about, joining to
create a mummy-like
creature. There came
a final flash of the
purest of white
lights, which blinded
all within the
chamber
momentarily. As
their sight returned
each looked towards
the newcomer. His
face was covered by
the cowl of his
bleached robes, and
offered no hint to his
identity, not that any
was needed. One hand
was buried deep
within the sleeves of
his gold trimmed
robes; the other
carefully held a small
crystal ball. The man
concentrated deeply on
the ball and the
rapidly moving shards
of light within it as he

awaited the arrival of
the final guest.